

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



DR. CRUDEN AND MARJORY TAKE SHADY INTO THEIR COUNSELS.

THE FORGED WILL.

CHAPTER V.

FAMILIAR as he was with every crevice of his dearly-loved resort, having closed the door on the inside, Shady without difficulty lowered a large lantern, that hung from the centre of the roof, and lit two of the candles ranged within it. By degrees the stranger's eyes, at first dazzled by daylight, were able to discern something of what was around. The walls, the roof, and the floor, were all of dark polished oak—the roof richly carved; books and vellum rolls in antique cases, all of the same dark

wood, left little of the walls uncovered. Amid objects so sombre, the feeble rays of the lantern, which Shady had now drawn up, were of little use.

"I never saw a better effect of darkness," said the stranger; "but is there no possibility of letting daylight in here? I would rather read some of these books by the sun, than by yonder lantern."

Shady pointed to him, that the windows, high and small, were boarded up.

"This," said his companion, pointing to a library ladder, "this would reach one; if I loosened a board I could easily replace it: may I do so?"

Shady demurred. "It would take time: he had already been too long from his duties—Sir Valary might require him;" not adding his conviction, that Mrs. Gillies would rate him soundly for not being in time to carry in the dinner—a service he always performed.

"Leave me," said the stranger; "trust me with this key, or lock me in; there is much here that I should like to examine; come to me when you will, when you can; an hour, or hours hence, will do for me."

Again there was a conflict in Shady's mind; the inhospitality of locking him up among paper and vellum, at a time when his own appetite was reminding him that nature required support of another kind, was repugnant to his feelings; yet, to have him so secured, was a convenience of which he saw the value. After a short pause, he said he would return as quickly as he could, and, locking the door on the outside, went somewhat nervously to present himself to the housekeeper. Happily for him, the lengthened stay of Dr. Cruden had saved him from wrath on account of his protracted absence.

"I am glad you are come," said Mrs. Gillies; "it is a long talk the doctor is having to-day, and there's Robinson been all the time holding his horse, and nobody to clean a knife, for the little there is to cut." Shady quietly began gathering the knives, intending to release Robinson from his post, when Dr. Cruden and Miss De la Mark, in deep conversation, crossed the courtyard and met him at its entrance. In a moment of weakness he slipped the knives into his pocket, as he could, and with a low bow stood deferentially until they had passed. They had scarcely done so when the doctor turned suddenly round, saying, "Why, here is Higgs; you could not have a better person than Higgs."

"How could I forget him?" said Marjory.

"Higgs," said the doctor, "I want some private talk with you; we can neither be overlooked nor overheard here," he continued, looking round.

"Entirely secluded, sir, from all observation," said Higgs, with another low bow.

"Here, then," said the doctor, pointing to an ancient cross, surmounting some broad stone steps, "let us sit here;" and placing Miss De la Mark on the higher step, and seating himself by her side, he pointed to the lower one, telling Shady to sit down. Shady preferred standing, for two reasons: one was, that it seemed little less than treason in him to sit in such a presense; the other, he had apprehensions as to the kind of cushion his pocket would afford, with its present contents.

"You must come close," said the doctor; "we don't want what we say to be caught by the birds of the air."

"The library, Dr. Cruden," said Marjory; "shall we go to the library?"

How unfortunate! During the many years that Shady Higgs had been librarian, he had never received an order connected with his post that he did not hail with delight. Now he fell back, and looked almost reproachfully at Marjory, she having been the means of bringing him into the dilemma in which he now stood. But the doctor did not observe his looks. "By all means, the library," he said; "we are sure to be safe there;" and assisting Marjory down, he led her with a quick step towards it, Shady following irresolutely. Opening the door, he expected to hear the stranger's voice immediately, in salutation; but all was silent, and the glimmer of the lantern nowhere revealed a human form. No boards appeared to have been removed; and as Shady nervously cast his eyes into the remoter parts, where the shadows were the thickest, he was equally perplexed and relieved to find nothing but vacancy. "He must be in the room," he thought, "but where?"

"Now, Higgs," said the doctor, "you keep your favour-ite haunt lighted: I wish I could hope it was dusted; we are at any rate safe now. I want you to answer me some questions. You have a grandmother?"

"Softly," said Shady, looking round.

"Well, I'm not going to say any harm of her," said the doctor; "so you need not be afraid of her coming. Where is she?"

Shady looked with an expression of innocent surprise. "My grandmother Elizabeth?" he asked.

"Yes; commonly called Bet Eggs," said the doctor.

"Is she not dead?" his large eyes dilating with a questioning look, which Dr. Cruden could not quite understand.

"Ay: is she, or is she not? that is the point."

"I have been given to believe she died," said Shady, quite forgetting the stranger, in the interest this question had excited in him.

"Do you believe it?" asked the doctor.

"Why should I not?"

"No evasions," said the doctor, rather sharply; "answer me plainly. Is she living?"

"Sir," said Shady, glancing at Marjory, "at another time I might speak of this—"

"This time—now," said the doctor; "the truth is, Higgs, she is not dead, and you know it, and you know why her existence is concealed, and you know—"

"Sir," said Shady, drawing himself to his full height, "pardon me if I am wanting in duty, that I contradict you. I know nothing of what you have said."

"Has Bloodworth never spoken to you concerning her?"

"It is seldom we converse, and never with my will, excepting on the household business."

"How many years is it since you saw her?"

"Twenty—when she crossed the sea, to wait on some noble lady following her husband."

"How long since you received the report of her death?"

"I think it may be about a twelvemonth."

"Well, you have at least reason to doubt the truth of that report?" He was silent.

"Higgs," said the doctor, "you have now an opportunity of proving the truth of your fidelity and affection to Sir Valary. It is of the utmost importance to ascertain whether your grandmother is alive or dead. What light can you throw upon the matter?"

"Well, if I offend my young lady's ears in what I say, the blame be far from me," he answered, with a sigh. "When my grandmother, Elizabeth, had finished the work of nursing my young lady, an ill feeling was raised against her by some means in the breast of my gracious lady, her honourable mother. I well remember, though I was then but a youth, her tears and complaints—yes, and bitter vows of vengeance, too, against the one that had done her this wrong. I grieved for her, for, though she was harsh and choleric in temper, she had well supplied the place of parents to me, and I was grateful. A place was provided for her, and the disgrace in which she left was unknown to any, save the few concerned in it. I well remember her words the last time I saw her."

"What were they?" said the doctor, quickly.

"She told me, (my young lady will pardon me,) she had more power to injure than her enemies had power to injure her; and nothing but her love for my young lady would have kept her quiet. 'If they desert you,' she said, 'I will come back before they expect, and do right to the wronged.'"

"Anything else?"

"Much of the same sort."

"And how did you get the account of her death?"

"It was reported in the neighbourhood, some time before a letter came from Dusseldorf, written by the person in whose house she died, and containing certificates of her death from the doctor, and a Lutheran minister."

"Did you credit these reports?"

"I did."

"But have you had anything since to shake your confidence in them?"

"Last summer," said Shady, "my young lady will remember the visit of a German pedlar?"

Marjory assented. "Looking among his wares for a suitable offering for my young lady for the next New Year's Day, I found a small purse of beads, bearing on one side the initials 'E. H.' and on the other side the crest of 'De la Mark': the snap and the trimmings were new; but by the beadwork I recognised it was no other than a purse, given in days of favour by my Lady De la Mark to my grandmother. I questioned the pedlar as to how he became possessed of it. He told me he had bought it, with some other trifles, of an aged woman who was in difficulty and wanted to raise money. I then asked him to describe the person, and how long it was since he had seen her. His description differed from what she was at our parting—'bent and feeble,' for strong and upright, 'snow-white hair' for raven black; but years and sorrow may have done this. He had seen her some ten months back; since then, I confess a vague suspicion has crossed my mind as to the truth of her death."

"And how was it you did not name this?"

"It never arose to more than suspicion; her things, no doubt, passed into other hands after her death, if she died; I love quietness, and would not make marvels."

"Do you think Bloodworth had any hand in the offence taken by Lady De la Mark?"

"Bloodworth is a sacrilegious man," said Shady; "his evil deeds known are enough. I would not lay suspicions at his door."

"Well, Higgs, I tell you it is of the greatest consequence that your grandmother, if living, should be produced; and I believe you are the most likely person to find her. Will you go over to the place where she is said to have died, and ascertain for us the facts, finding out, if possible, the persons who signed the certificate, and, indeed, all facts necessary for substantiating either her death or her life? and in the meantime keep your mission a perfect secret from every one. I will prepare everything. You will be sent with a message to me when I am ready for you, and the cause of your detention must be known to no one."

Shady was aghast, and far too much surprised to answer.

"This is settled, then. So far, so good," said the doctor, rising. "Now, Mr. Shady, let us out of this black hole."

Marjory looked doubtfully, as Shady stooped down to unfasten the door; she felt that Dr. Cruden was mistaken, and that many things conspired to make him unfit for the important mission imposed on him. A book falling at her feet, startled her into a slight cry.

"What! are your books alive, Higgs?" said the doctor, picking it up, "flying about the place like bats."

Shady instantly recollected the stranger. While he was debating as to the course he should pursue, a voice from the top of the room, which Marjory recognised, said, "Pardon the intrusion of a friend;" and the stranger descended the ladder. A more curious group can hardly be imagined than that on which the light of

the lantern now fell; the slight, small form of Marjory, her face pale with fatigue, anxiety, and now with something like terror; the parchment-like visage of Dr. Cruden, his periwig and hat both rather displaced by stooping for the book; Shady, the very picture of astonishment and mortification; and the stranger, the only one of the whole that appeared noways discomfited by his presence among them.

"Mr. Higgs, don't distress yourself; you have done good service to the house of De la Mark this day, though inadvertently," said the stranger. "I don't fear receiving a full pardon from you, madam, and from you, sir," bowing to them respectively, "when I have disclosed a few facts. Shall we return to the council table?"

The doctor, putting one hand through the breast of his waistcoat, and the other under his coat tails, his favourite attitude in delivering a lecture, surveyed him from head to foot. Regardless of the scrutiny, he placed himself at the table, and began thus: "Elizabeth Higgs is dead—I saw her burial."

They looked incredulous, but none spoke.

"I was in Dusseldorf at the time, and knew the Lutheran minister who attended her. She died in peace with all men, and fervently desiring a blessing on the infant she had left," bowing to Marjory, "and praying heartily for her grandson. I happened to be confined to the house from an accident at the time, and saw much of her, for we lodged under the same roof. A little kind sympathy with her sufferings from a fellow countryman opened her heart, and she unburdened it to me of every secret that had distressed her—a revelation I have never confided to human ear, and will not, until it shall be for the benefit of those whom it concerns. But rest satisfied: she is dead, and your mission useless."

The doctor's surprise at all that he had just heard had prevented him from interrupting the stranger with any questions; but now that he saw he had told all that he meant to tell, he said, "You will excuse me, sir; it is possible that all you have advanced may be perfectly correct, and I am far from wishing to offend you, or any gentleman in so near a point as doubting veracity; but you will please to remember that the subject having been so amply discussed in your hearing, and you being a perfect stranger to us, it is natural that we should look for something—some confirming evidence—before trusting implicitly to you; and also, it would be pleasant to know who our informant is, and, I may add, how he came to drop upon us so opportunely."

The stranger, looking calmly and steadily at him, replied, "For my presence here, I refer you to Miss De la Mark. I am a world-wide wanderer, without a settled home as yet. I can give you no proof that I have advanced the truth now. I do not blame you for being sceptical; but, according to human maxims, you may believe me, since I have no interest in deceiving you."

If he would only trust the doctor with some of Bet Eggs' revelations. The stranger shook his head. "In due time, when I am wanted, you may depend upon me: it is not whim, but necessity, that keeps me silent."

"Answer me one thing," said the doctor. "Did the widow Higgs confine herself to her own history, or—"

"Come, Mr. Higgs," said the stranger, "advance—I shall beg for a night's lodging in yonder gallery."

"He is impenetrable," thought the doctor.

"I think the portrait of the nurse is hanging there, isn't it, carrying an infant?"

His three hearers exchanged glances quickly.

He smiled. "There," he said, "is evidence for you."

"Strange," said Dr. Cruden; and Shady advanced to

the door. All attempts on the part of the doctor to induce the stranger to return to his house and become his guest were unavailing.

"No," he replied, "I will be Sir Valary's guest, though he shall not know it. My plaid is an excellent soldier's bed, and I shall sleep soundly among the shadows of the house of De la Mark."

"I really believe he is a true man," said the doctor to Marjory, as they walked towards the Tower, Shady following to obtain the keys.

"There is a frankness in his manner," replied Marjory, "that quite fascinated me when I first met him."

THOUGHTS ABOUT THINKERS.

"REALLY, sir, I am surprised you don't see this. It's as plain as a pikestaff. You surely don't deny my facts. There they are—stubborn facts, sir. You can't point out a single fallacy in the arguments I have built upon them; and yet you are not convinced. You must excuse me if I say that you must be very inattentive or sadly prejudiced, not to see as I do."

"You're very complimentary, sir. To say the honest truth, however, I was just thinking all that about you, only I did not like to put it in so many words. Some of your facts are true enough; but then they are mine as well as yours, and the rest of them are not facts at all. As to your arguments, anything more inconsequential and fallacious I never heard. But I will not reason with you any longer. It is quite useless."

And when it gets to that pass, it is useless.

It was very sad, we thought, that the disputants should get so angry and say such rude things, especially when nothing came of it; but then, we remembered that it was one of the commonest things in the world for disputants to get both angry and rude, particularly when beaten. Very likely we have none of us taken part in a discussion in which one side—we need not say which—was so unreasonable.

One thing is very plain, that in a world where such discussions are common, there must be a great amount of diversity of opinion. In fact, there is no subject on which two opinions can be entertained about which there is only one. You cannot take up a newspaper without finding that the editor or some of his correspondents have some great mistake to rectify, or something to controvert. What spiritless things a great many books would be, if nothing were admitted into them that savoured of controversy! Parliament might set to work after a late breakfast, and go home to a not very late dinner, if there did not happen to be two sides of the House, and if on both sides there did not happen to be a number of men with views of their own. No doubt, all this diversity, whilst it has its evils, has also its advantages. The earth never yields her harvests except as the result of labour, and labour is a blessing; for it strengthens the muscles and sinews, and sends the pulsations of vigorous health coursing through the frame; and so the toil of conflict which we have to endure in winning the richer harvest of truth may be intended to invigorate the intellectual man. It affords opportunity too—sad that we should be so little disposed to avail ourselves of it—for the exercise of mutual forbearance and charity.

A great many reasons might be suggested for the existence of this diversity; but at present we advert to only one of them. It is very obvious that there is not a little faulty thinking in the world. There would be far less difference of sentiment than there is, if people

thought more carefully. What we wish to do, then, is to point out a few faults of thinkers.

And yet, how many people never think at all! Of course they have to think, more or less, of the work and the pleasures of life; for it would be impossible to live without some such thought as that. But they never think thoughtfully and consecutively on any of the great subjects with which thoughtful minds are occupied, and which ought to be matter of deep concern to every man. It may be admitted that there are a few here and there, who have not the power of thought. They get bewildered as soon as they try to put two ideas together, or even to get fairly hold of one. They are like a Dutchman whom Washington Irving mentions, whose ideas were so square that he could not get them rounded about in his head, which had the misfortune to be round. But these are comparatively few. There are numbers who could think if they would; but they are too lazy. Give them something to enjoy, something to amuse themselves with—a dance, a song, a fête, a gay party, and they are satisfied. If they must have something literary, or instructive, or useful, it must be something very easy and very pleasant; a lecture with a great many illustrations, and sparkling with wit or grinning with broad humour; a sermon, very pictorial and very exciting, and not very long; books, for there are times when even such people cannot get on without books, in the reading-made-easy sort of style—an exciting tale, or something of that kind: but nothing will they hear or read which requires thought. What a pity that there are so many minds, gifted, to say the least, with average reasoning powers, and some of them with much more, which should thus suffer their energies to be enfeebled when there are such large opportunities of mental culture, and when, besides, there are so many subjects on which they ought to think.

There are two passages of Scripture which are especially appropriate to such persons. The former of them is contained in that repertory of sound practical wisdom, the book of Proverbs: "Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?" and the other will be found in one of Paul's epistles: "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." It is a proof of great and inexcusable folly when a man has large opportunities of instruction, and throws them all away. He is dead to all the great purposes of his being who makes pleasure the end and aim of life.

But now—coming to those who do think in some fashion—there is, first of all, the *dependent thinker*. The writer recollects a worthy man, a thoughtful sort of man too, and anything but a Papist, once saying to him, "I have sometimes wished I had a pope, who could settle for me every doubt, and tell me what I ought to believe." There are a good many people who have a similar yearning for a pope; and so, looking up to somebody whom they deem competent to tell the time of day, they say, "I'll set my watch by your clock," not aware, perhaps, that he, in his turn, may be setting his clock by somebody else's watch. It is sometimes amusing to hear a man of this order coming out strongly with opinions which he would have you believe are thoroughly independent and original, but which you can trace directly to the source from which he got them. You could indicate those sources, if it were not uncivil to do so, very much as a shrewd but not very well-behaved old gentleman is said to have indicated at church, in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard by the clergyman and by the congregation too—which was especially galling—the authors to whom the said clergyman had been indebted

for his sermon: "That's Sherlock; that's Tillotson; that's Jeremy Taylor." "I tell you what, fellow, if you don't hold your tongue I'll have you turned out of the church." "That's his own."

Sometimes you are surprised by a complete and sudden change in the man's views, whilst his authority—the person from whom he had been accustomed to take his cue—is unchanged in his, and you are half disposed to fancy that he has set up thinking on his own account. But you soon find out your mistake. He sets his watch now by the market-place instead of by the cathedral, and hence the difference. Perhaps by-and-by you will find him preferring railway time. You would not care so much about it if he were honest enough to tell you where he gets his notions: though very likely, in many cases, he has no other idea than that he is an independent man, who thinks out everything for himself. We must all of us be somewhat dependent at first, just as the young swimmer depends on some kind teacher, who places his hand under his chin, and holds him up whilst he takes his first strokes, or who puts on corks or bladders. But just as, if he is to be a swimmer on his own account, he must dispense with both, so we must try, if we can, to think for ourselves.

"That's all true," says one; "just my opinion. People are led by the nose. They repeat, parrot-like, what their parents, their preachers, their newspapers say. It's long since I determined to have done with that sort of thing. I should be sorry to be in such leading-strings. I like independent thinkers. I think for myself." Yes; but *how*? That's the question. There happens to be a good deal of superficial thinking in the world—of half thinking, quarter thinking, and even far less than that. A man sees only a corner of some great subject, and even that he sees only in some cross light, which shows it in altogether wrong proportions, and at once he thinks himself competent to pronounce on the whole. It used to be the fashion, when Byron was the rage, for young men to turn down their collars, and talk in a melancholy, misanthropical sort of style, as though it were the height of greatness to be exceedingly wretched, and as though the whole world were at war with them, and they at war with the whole world, whilst really the world cared very little about them. Fashions change. It is long since that went out. It is in some quarters the fashion now to be very independent. It is deemed a great thing to have the reputation of being independent and original, —the reputation, mark, of independence and originality, rather than the things themselves. Men, and some of them very young men, take for granted, with the utmost coolness, that old-fashioned beliefs are altogether exploded, or if not, that they are of very little account. They may do very well for children, and elderly ladies, and preachers, but not for them. They must have something higher, and deeper, and altogether more satisfactory. On matters which concern men's everlasting interests; on matters which learned and profound thinkers have approached with the deepest seriousness, and in which they have found enough to tax their utmost powers; on matters of which even inspired men speak with bated breath, they can speak confidently and oracularly, as though in their presence the collective wisdom of the past must be mute. It is not unjust or severe to say that the thinking of such people must be superficial, and in most cases it is anything but independent. And then there is in the mouths of such people not a little cant about earnestness—a glorious thing in itself, for a man is worth nothing unless he be in earnest, but which, as they use it, often means nothing more than this, "Come out boldly with what you think. Never mind

whether you have thoroughly investigated it or not, whether you have done all you could to get to the bottom of the subject or not; out with it." Now, this is a sort of thinking which is always to be deprecated. The man who supposes that such thinking is enough, is sure to get far wrong himself, and to lead others wrong too; for it commonly happens that those who form opinions hastily are equally hasty in expressing them. Whilst we advocate all manliness and independence of thought, we say, let it be really thought. Let every subject, but especially those which concern God's truth and man's everlasting destiny, be investigated calmly, thoroughly, with every available help, and with earnest prayer for light from heaven. At the same time, let it be remembered that there are some subjects in which the limits of human reason are soon reached, and which it is quite possible even the loftiest created intellect will never be able to fathom—subjects, therefore, which we must be content to leave enwrapped in the mystery in which they have been shrouded by God himself, waiting, in all humility, the light which he may see fit to cast upon them in another and a brighter world!

There is another class, who may be designated *loose thinkers*—those who have no firm hold on their opinions, but who are at everybody's mercy, and who can be turned about by any wind or tide. You expounded your views to one of this order. He had not taken, he said, that view of the subject before; indeed, he had taken one the very reverse. But you stated the thing so clearly, and the arguments you adduced were so convincing, that he adopted your conclusions at once. You were delighted. You never met with such a sensible man before. He thinks exactly as you do; and what is more, you have had the merit of putting him right. You mention him whilst discussing the same subject with some one who differs from you. "Briggs held those very notions," you say, "which you are advocating; but I am happy to tell you that he has given them all up." "Given them all up!" is the reply. "Why, all I know is, that last night he said he agreed with me perfectly. You had shaken him a little, he admitted; but I soon brought him round." Not very well pleased, down goes your opinion of Briggs, 99½ per cent. This is the disposition which, in regard to religious truth, the apostle Paul condemns, when he says, "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." It is this, too, which is condemned by the apostle James: "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."

Richard Cecil once said, "I have a shelf in my library for tried and proved authors. When I have read a book and found it really valuable, I put it on that shelf; and though I may hear it strongly spoken against, there it remains." In the same way, I have a shelf in my mind for proved opinions. When I have thoroughly investigated a subject, and have reached a definite conclusion, I put it on that shelf. I may afterwards hear it called in question, and I may not be able at once to rebut the arguments by which it is assailed; nevertheless, I do not take it down. There it remains. You hold scarcely any one in lighter esteem, than the man who, like the weather-cock, is turned by every breeze.

In contrast with this loose thinker, is the *tenacious thinker*. We are now speaking of tenacity as a fault; but it will be obvious from the quotation we have just made, that we hold in due respect the man who clings tenaciously to an opinion once really formed. If it were only a traditional one—an opinion which he received from his parents or his teachers—respect for them re-

quires that he should not fling it aside, as, when a boy, he threw away his whistle or his drum when he was tired of their music, or when somebody presented him with a new toy. And if, after long and deliberate thought, a man has worked out a conclusion of his own, it seems only natural that he should hesitate when any one bids him give it up at a moment's warning. But the same love of truth which led to the adoption of a sentiment, requires its surrender when it is seen not to be truth. What we have in view now, however, is that kind of obstinacy, with which, on matters it may be of no great moment, men cling to an opinion they have once expressed. That is the thing. It is not so much that they have formed it, as they have uttered it. It came out, perhaps, in the heat of a discussion, or casually without much thought; but from that moment they were pledged to it. You might as well ask them for one of their teeth, as ask them to give it up. The more you argue, the more they cling to it, and they by and by even think you are doing them a personal wrong in trying to show them that they are mistaken. Your best plan with such people, is in staving off the expression of an opinion till they have looked at the subject in all its aspects. Then they may possibly be right, and if so, you will have all the advantage of their tenacity on the right side. A gentleman was once arguing with a Scotch lady of this order, when at length he stopped. "I tell you what, ma'am, I'll not argue with you any longer; you're not open to conviction."

"Not open to conviction, sir," was the indignant reply; "I scorn the imputation, sir; I am open to conviction. But," she added, after a moment's pause, "show me the man who can convince me."

It is to be feared that the secret of all this is in many cases, not love of truth, but love of self—in one word, pride. We don't like to be beaten. We don't like to say—that is really the most honourable thing in the world to say, when we ought to say it—"I have been mistaken." We should as soon think of clinging to a sinking vessel, as of clinging to what we know to be false. The strongest persuasion of the strength of such a ship will not make it sea-worthy; nor will the strongest persuasion of the truth of a lie make it truth.

There is an old comlet which says:

When caps into a crowd are thrown,
Each takes what fits him for his own.

That holds good sometimes, but not always. We are quite as frequently disposed to pick up the caps which belong to other people, and as we thrust them down on their heads, to say, "That cap fits." But is there not another block nearer home, which one other of them would fit quite as well? "I know," perhaps we may be disposed to say, "plenty who never think at all; I know where that friend of mine gets his notions; never was there anybody more hasty or superficial in his judgments, than another I could name; there's a perfect Neighbour Pliable; and there's the very fac-simile of the unconvincible Scotchwoman." But which cap belongs to us?

We have thus endeavoured to place before our readers a few of the faults to which we are liable in the prosecution of thought. In these days of sifting inquiry, when error assumes such specious forms and lies are so like the truth—in these days, when pre-eminently it is demanded of every man that he be able to give a reason of the hope that is in him—anything which will help to set the inquirer on the right track, and to guard him against mistake, is surely invested with deep interest to all, but especially to young men. Young men must learn to think, and to think correctly and well, if they are to be equal to the work which lies ready at their hands.

There can be no division of labour here. It is not to be said to one man, "You think," and to another, "You work;" every man, as far as he is able, must both think and work. There are great social questions before the world, every one of which demands thought; God's works are all appeals to thought; and God's word, portraying before us the great, the beautiful, the true, commands us to "think on these things." If we might address a word of counsel to young men, and indeed to young people generally, we should say, choose and study those books which compel you to think; prize the teaching, which, whilst it seeks to awaken in you deep and mighty feeling, endeavours to awaken that feeling by an appeal to thought; and let your friends be such as will help you to think. We are all of us liable to prejudices, which sadly warp our judgment, and defraud us of the truth. We should try, as far as we can, to see everything as it is, in the light of truth. Let our prayer ascend to heaven, "Give us, O Lord, in thy light to see light; open thou our eyes that we may behold wondrous things out of thy law." So, seeking to know the truth, we may be very certain that we shall not greatly err, but that we shall at least know so much of it as will make us wise unto salvation, and fit us for that world where we shall "know even as we are known."

A RACE IN A JUNGLE.

DID I ever meet a wild elephant? Yes, I have; and "ugly customers" they are to meet, too. Ill-tempered brutes they are, who have been trunked out of elephant society for some glaring breach of etiquette, and threatened with the penalty of being tusked, if ever they dared venture again within forbidden precincts; morose brutes, solitary and selfish, revenging themselves upon unfending denizens of the jungle, and peculiarly spiteful to mankind in general. These outcasts invariably frequent the high-roads by which travellers must pass, or locate themselves on the narrowest passes of the steepest ghauts; the terror of the Tappal, or post-runners, and a perfect ogre to palanquin-bearers, coolies, and way-farers generally. Sometimes they maintain their position for years, despite the wary watchfulness of native Sirkars, or huntsmen; despite also the occasional batch of subalterns, who are amateurs of the hunt, and who, more is the pity, not unoften fall victims to their temerity, and meet with dreadful and violent deaths.

I remember one old fellow of this Pariah caste of elephants. I caught a sight of him once, and heard his insane trumpeting, I am happy to say, from a safe elevation above his fixed promenade. Despite all his ferocity, he was amazingly partial to sugar-candy, as many a mess secretary could testify on reference to the loss-book in mess supplies. At that time, six and seven hundred tubs of sugar-candy used to be despatched at a time from Madras, for the supply of the regiments stationed on the Malabar coast. It so chanced once, that a gang of these coolies, arriving about mid-day close to where the old *solitaire* of an elephant had taken up his position, disburthened themselves of their tubs, and, piling these up in a heap, betook themselves to the banks of a neighbouring stream, where they fell to cooking their curry and rice. After dinner, and that coolies' regular luxury, the after-dinner nap, they returned to the sugar-tubs, intending to resume the line of march. Great was their consternation, on emerging from the thicket, to find a mass of staves and hoops scattered in all directions, and, slowly retreating from the havoc, a huge-tusked elephant, wagging his trunk backwards and forwards, and appa-

rently in a high state of self-contentment. The frightened blacks took to their heels, and never stopped running until they reached the lines of the sepoy detachment at the next station, and there they poured their tale of sorrow into the wandering ears of the subaltern commanding the *sepoys*.

For years this elephant, though still haunting the same spot, escaped retribution for the felony committed on the sugar-tubs. His vile and revengeful disposition finally brought him to an abrupt and violent end. Travelling up from Bangalore to the Neilgherrie hills, there came a corpulent subaltern of cavalry, to whose disorganized digestive powers the shaking of a palanquin journey and change of air had been recommended by his doctor. The unsuspecting traveller was dozing away the warm hours of noontide to the droning "hum hi, how, hum, heideybabas" of his bearers, when suddenly he came to the earth with a tremendous shock, and the palanquin-bearers were scattered to the four winds, as though a shell had burst in the midst of them. Scrambling out as well as he could, the horrified traveller saw the mischievous twinkling little eyes of a huge elephant glaring at him from beside a tree not ten yards distant. To turn and run faster than he had ever done before in his life was the work of an instant, and in another the elephant was tearing after him at full speed. This unequal race continued for perhaps ten minutes or more, until poor F—, who could as soon climb up to the moon as get up into a tree, began to get winded, and in sheer despair took to dodging the elephant round and round a teak tree of gigantic proportions. This kind of sport continued for some few minutes, until the vicious brute, quite exasperated, retreated a few yards, and made a terrific dash at the trunk of the tree, thinking, doubtless, to bring it down by the run. The shock was so great, that it threw the terrified subaltern clean off his legs, whilst the elephant had literally transfixed itself—the extreme points of its prodigious tusks protruding on the opposite side, and rendering all the animal's gigantic struggles to disentangle itself unavailing, till, finally worn out with fury and exhaustion, it sank down upon its knees and groaned horribly.

It was now the stout lieutenant's turn to be the aggressor. Running back to his palanquin, he fetched his ready-loaded Manton, and, adding to the charge an extra bullet, fired both barrels into the ear of the elephant. The report of fire-arms attracted some wood-cutters, that were not far distant, and with them most of the palanquin-bearers had found refuge. These coming up, the teak tree was soon levelled with the ground, the tusks disentangled and cut out of the elephant's head, and with these trophies of his prowess safely secured to the top of the palanquin, F— pursued his journey, and reached his destination without further adventure.

Although the foregoing was certainly a very narrow escape, there was an adventure happened to myself and friend, not with a single, but with a herd of some forty elephants, the very recollection of which nearly makes the blood curdle in my veins as I write. We were travelling up from Bangalore to Tellicherry, and of our company were several ladies and children in so many palanquins that the sum total of the bearers and mussels, or torch-carriers, (each palanquin has twelve bearers and one mussulgee as its complement,) amounted to seventy-eight men. We ourselves were on horseback, and the godowallahs travelled on foot beside us, because we only went short stages, and at an easy pace in the cool of the morning and the afternoon.

My friend was a great sportsman, and was accompanied by some of the finest greyhounds, terriers, and

spaniels in India. They were a perfect nuisance, as it was next to impossible to check their natural impulse for the pursuit of hares and other game, which started out at every few yards in the jungle. The morning in question we were in the very thickest of that dense forest, the Wynard Jungle. Amongst other things that crossed our path was a magnificent elk, and the temptation proved too great for all of us. Away we went, horses, dogs, and godowallahs; but some half hour's chase soon convinced us of the utter folly of pursuing anything in a jungle so thickly intertwined with brambles and thorns; so, recalling the dogs, we rode back leisurely to whence we had started, and having regained the high-road, followed it, supposing ourselves to be, as we then were, on the track of the palanquins, which had continued their journey, unconscious of our deviation from the route.

So we continued for the next half hour, and everything went on satisfactorily enough. Then, however, we came upon a part where three roads met, and, having no guide with us, we were utterly at a loss which to adopt. There was no remedy but to trust to the natural sagacity of the horses and dogs; so, slackening the reins, we were carried along the path they had seemed unanimously to fix upon. Although the sequel proved them wrong in the choice, the poor brutes were not exactly to blame, as the ruts visibly proclaimed carts had but recently passed that way; and so, nothing doubting, we pursued our way in silent suspense. We had, perhaps, been riding half an hour in this direction, when the dense gloom of the jungle was suddenly relieved by brilliant sunlight, and a few minutes afterwards we passed into a large open space, about a quarter of a mile square, and where the woodcutters had evidently made a clearance. There were at least fifty elephants, of all sizes, browsing here, lopping off huge branches of trees, with which some fanned the flies away, and others were making a meal.

Both our horses were most valuable Arabs. We might have had time to turn round and scamper back without attracting attention, but for two causes. The first was, that the sight had momentarily deprived us of the power of reflection. The second was, that the Arabs, seizing the bits in their mouths, set off at full gallop, and we positively charged right through the thickest of the herd, and so into the jungle on the opposite side, apparently as much to the consternation of the elephants as ourselves, for they dispersed in all directions, trumpeting forth their terror in the most terrific and deafening bellowing: the dogs kept pace with us bravely.

We were not long left in suspense as to the intention of the elephants. They soon recovered the confusion they had been scared into, and, setting up a roar of anger and defiance, followed in pursuit of us as hard as they could gallop. Fortunately, even their temporary alarm had given us a considerable start, for they came after us at a prodigious rate. The crackling of leaves and tearing away of branches that impeded their progress was as the effect of a hurricane sweeping through the jungle, and the incessant thundering they kept up was not an inapt accompaniment. The pursuit became hotter and hotter, till it positively assumed the aspect of a race. Cunning as they were ferocious, the brutes took short cuts, which threatened to head us, and at one time, for upwards of a mile, we were racing side by side, only separated by an impenetrable hedge of prickly-pear, which, for aught we knew, might at any moment have a gap in it that would seal our doom. But, happily, such was not the case, and after a race of many miles, the latter part of which was a neck-or-nothing affair with us (for our brave horses were fairly winded, and would not have held out



A RACE FOR LIFE IN A JUNGLE.

W. H. WOODS, J.R.

much longer), to our inexpressible relief we heard a loud shout, evidently proceeding from people coming in our direction. The elephants heard it also, and seemed to recognise it, for they stopped short and turned tail, and with one parting blast rushed back into the jungle again. Shortly afterwards we came upon a large body of woodcutters, the ruts of whose bullock carts had originally misled our horses.

As soon as we had recovered from the fright and fatigue, we felt that we had been fasting the whole day. Under such circumstances, knives, forks, and spoons were easily dispensed with. We fisted up the curry and rice with all the avidity of hungry hunters, and with as much elegance and facility, as regards squeezing the rice into compact balls, and then popping them into our mouths, as the most fastidious Brahmin. Then came a delicious draught of cocoa-nut water. In retracing our steps, we crossed the spot where we had first encountered the elephants, not without a shudder. Here we were joined by our trembling black grooms, who were of a perfectly leaden hue, from the consternation and suspense. They had climbed up the highest tree at hand on the very first alarm being given, and in their hurry thrown away the fowling-pieces they were carrying; to which fact, perhaps, they owed their safety, as some inquisitive elephant, finding these and chucking them up in the air, started both barrels, creating a report that scared them away from the place.

It was past midnight before we reached the bungalow, where the rest of our party had arrived as early as 10 A.M., since which their anxiety on our behalf can be more readily imagined than described.

OTAGO;

OR, A RUSH TO THE NEW GOLD-FIELDS OF NEW ZEALAND.

CHAPTER VIII.—VICTORIA—ITS GOVERNMENT—APATHY OF THE PEOPLE—WORKING MEN IN VICTORIA—REASONS WHY SINGLE FEMALES SHOULD NOT GO THERE—VICTORIA COMPARED WITH NEW ZEALAND—MORE ABOUT GOLD DIGGINGS.

VICTORIA, at one time, had some superior attractions for emigrants to those of any other colony; but they have been done away by misgovernment. The colony is governed by factions, none of which are able to form a strong government, owing to the ambition and dishonesty of its friends, or, more correctly writing, of its enemies; and thus one faction quickly succeeds the other. The whole science of government understood by those who have yet been in power there, consists in a little scheming and more dodging. The statesmen of Victoria seem to think that good government consists in holding the public lands and all real political power in the hands of the few, and deceiving the people with sham democratic institutions. But all the people are not deceived. They see the shameful misgovernment of the country, year after year, but do not try to prevent it. They care not how the colony is governed, and the cause of their apathy is, that the colony is not their intended home for the future. They wish to make a little money and leave. In Navarre Diggings, at the general election, in August, 1861, I was acquainted with thirteen men, nearly all of them Englishmen, who did not vote, although they could have done so by walking a few hundred yards. They were all intelligent and respectable men, and the only interest they took in the affairs of the colony was looking for the chance of getting a few pounds to enable them to leave.

It is written that, during the siege of Acre, in 1191, a battle was fought between the Turks and Christians on

the sea. In one galley the Turks got possession of the upper tier of oars, the Christians of the lower tier, and they pulled in opposite directions. The "ship of state" in Victoria is managed by the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly in about the same way. They do not pull together at any work of any real importance to the people. It may be inferred from this, that the members of one house are right and those of the other wrong; but such a conclusion does not necessarily follow from the manner of working I have described. We will suppose those in the lower tier to be pulling in the right direction, and that those in the upper tier become weary of their toil. Under such circumstances, those in the lower tier will lie on their oars also, and no progress will be made; or, should those in the lower tier become convinced that they are going in the wrong direction, and turn and pull the other way, they would soon find their progress opposed by those in the upper tier, who would turn and pull against them. In this way all real progress in intelligent legislation is prevented. They cannot pass a liberal land bill, a bill for mining on private property, or for simplifying the transfer of land. They only make some sham reforms, to which one faction can point as the cause of all that is wrong, and say the colony is suffering under the evil effects of too much democracy.

A majority of persons who emigrate want employment in the place they seek for a home, and this is very difficult to obtain in Victoria. For what little employment there is, a price is generally paid that looks on paper remunerative to intending emigrants; but let them try to invest the money in land—let them have to pay it out for medical advice, or expend it for the wants of a family where it was earned, and they will learn that in Victoria man is too cheap and bread and land too dear.

In a leading article in the "Melbourne Argus" I have read that the working people of Victoria are the best fed, the best clothed and lodged, of any others in the world. Such statements as that are disgraceful to the press. The writer of that article either wilfully misrepresents, and has a very affluent imagination, or his knowledge of the world is very limited. The labouring people of other countries can make a respectable appearance in a church, or any other place, when they choose, but three fourths of the working population of Victoria cannot. A majority of them have but one suit of clothes, and that of a kind that would be worn nowhere else. Labourers, in travelling from one place to another, searching for work, as many of them have to pass much time in doing, carry their bedding, a pair of blankets, on their backs, and generally sleep on the ground. More than one fourth of the population are living on the gold-fields, where the dwelling is of canvas, and the bedding a pair of blankets, too often spread on the ground; the labourers on the railways and other public works also live in miserable tents.

I assure the intending English emigrant that the lodging of an English horse, or pig, is far superior to that of a labourer in Victoria. If a man intending to become a labourer lands in Victoria, the probability is that he will not choose to go on the public works, but will seek for some agricultural or pastoral employment. If he goes to seek for work amongst the farmers, he must start with a pair of blankets on his back, some tea and sugar, and a vessel in which to make the tea. He will want a few shillings in money, and will be able to buy bread at any house where he asks for it. He should have on a heavy pair of boots, for the prospect is, that he will wear out a light pair before his journey is over. He will be able to get lodgings in stack yards, stables, and other like places, and, to do the country justice, he

could sleep there very comfortably nine months out of twelve, if unmolested by fleas. At every place where he asks for employment he will be told, "I have all the hands I wish at present."

Should the farmer be very anxious for men, he will be sociable, and will ask the poor "new chum" if he has been long looking for work, and will remark that travelling at that season of the year is very wearisome. Apparently from pure pity to the man he will say, "We are not very busy just now, but you can stop if you like a week or two. I dare say we can find something for you to do, and you can have your tucker and ten shillings a week."

"I understood that wages for farm servants were twenty-five shillings per week," the new chum will say.

"So they are," replies the farmer; "but then, you know, we don't wish to hire any one now."

If the man's money is gone, and he is hungry, he will accept of the farmer's offer, and be in no danger of being killed in "the lap of too much leisure." If he has some money left, he will move on. A hungry man will soon come along and accept of the farmer's offer, and the new chum will soon get hungry and accept of a similar offer from some other.

I do not wish it to be inferred that ten shillings per week are the highest wages given to farm labourers: for I have reason to believe that some are really getting twenty-five; but they are men of whom the farmer has some knowledge. They have been tried, and can be trusted with any branch of the farmer's business. They are good men, such as will command good wages in any country, and have had colonial experience. The new chum will be astonished to learn that a less value is placed on him, because he has just come from England, the heart of civilization and intelligence.

The emigrant may have formed some romantic notions of the occupation of a shepherd, and may seek for a situation of a wool-grower or squatter. He may not have much trouble in getting engaged as a shepherd, at thirty pounds per annum, and will probably be sent to live in an old hut full of fleas and bugs, and from three to seven miles from any other house. Once a week will be sent to him his rations, consisting of flour, meat, tea, and sugar; and then, in order to get any wages, more than some tobacco or some other truck, he must live one year without a good night's sleep, without a light in the evening except what his ingenuity can invent, without a cup of coffee, without knowing what is going on in the world, and little better than one of the sheep over which he is employed to act as dry nurse, by attending them in their walks, watching them feed, and washing them once a year.

For some reason unknown to me, there are a few in Victoria calling out for more emigrants, especially for unmarried females, to equalize the sexes. The majority of single men in Victoria do not wish to marry in the colony, but to make a few pounds and leave it. Many of those who are willing to marry and stay in the colony, are not worth marrying: they have no home and friends elsewhere, and never will have any in any place.

There are men in Victoria who have several times done well on the diggings, and have gone to Melbourne, Geelong, or Adelaide, and married girls who have come from the United Kingdom as government emigrants, husband hunting. Too often they live with the "new wives" a short time, and then leave them to look out for themselves. The chances of a girl going from England to Victoria to catch a good husband, are just one in ten of her "catching a tartar." Certainly, good husbands are to be found there; but they are men who do not care about a girl who has come out husband-hunting.

I have as much respect for "the merry maids of England" as any Englishman can have, and in the advice here given, I am guided by a feeling of pure philanthropy. I intreat them not to emigrate to Victoria, unless under the care of parents or some friends on whom they can depend. Let them not land friendless in a city like Melbourne, trusting to the cruel selfishness of those who are ever watching for the arrival of the unprotected.

I will relate one instance of how single females may be treated, of several similar that came under my observation while in Victoria, and then leave this subject. A man and woman were keeping a sly grog-shop on the Tarrangower gold-field, and, wishing to extend their business, they put up a room for dancing, engaged a musician, and sent an order to a labour market in Melbourne for some girls. Two girls, the oldest not seventeen, were sent up from the town, where they had paid five shillings each at the labour market for being furnished with situations, the oldest as barmaid and the other as a nursemaid, in a respectable public-house. The barmaid was to have thirty pounds per annum, and the nursemaid twenty-five. When they arrived at Tarrangower, eighty-three miles from Melbourne, and found their future home, in place of seeing a respectable public-house, they were conducted into a house of calico; and as the evening was drawing near, they were told by the "missis" to hurry and get their supper, and then dress in their best, for the boys would soon be in. The girls learnt that their business was to be that of attracting custom to the house, and dancing with dirty diggers. In a house of the kind I have mentioned, it is customary, after a dance, for a man to treat his partner, and the girls were told to always take shilling drinks. The girls refused to do the duty required of them, and by displaying an unusual amount of what the mistress called obstinacy, they escaped from the place and got back to Melbourne.

Is there any one in the United Kingdom who wishes young female emigrants to be exposed to temptations like those of twenty-five pounds and thirty pounds a year, with nothing to do but dress well, dance with young men and drink "sherry spiders" and "shandy gaff?" Those girls never would have been paid their wages, and before the year expired their home would probably have been one of greater infamy than that I have described. Had instances like this been rare, I would not have mentioned it; but for female emigrants to be thus deceived is a common occurrence, and any one who has resided six months in Victoria can give evidence of the truth of what I state.

It is admitted now by nearly all, that "Victoria's auriferous fame is fast passing into a shade." It has been prophesied in Victoria, that "she may soon become the heart-broken mother of a pauperized offspring." That prophecy is already fulfilled. The people of Victoria can justly point with pride to their progress in many things. Their public works, government buildings, gardens, and many other things, certainly show wealth and progress of one kind, and that is, of a few towards immense wealth, and of the many towards the lowest depths of poverty.

The motto of "Advance Australia" seems to be acted on by the majority, in advancing in a direction contrary to the acquisition of permanent homes and happiness. Englishmen are always more dissatisfied with the colonies than the Irish or Scotch. The Scotch appear the most contented; but the English are ever talking about going home, and many of them are leaving every year. Thousands more would go if they could. Many who have made fortunes in the colonies, and become leading men in them, talk while there of "our adopted home,"

and the lasting interest they have in it. Presently they disappear, and are known in it no more. They have gone elsewhere to live on their money.

I should be doing injustice to Victoria if I did not give its climate credit for being a very healthy one. None of the southern colonies can be called unhealthy; I believe in none of them could people live so exposed to the changes of weather in all seasons as in Victoria.

Emigrants intending to become farmers will find in Australia and New Zealand two difficulties to contend with in occupying new land, and of the two places these difficulties are the greater in the latter. In Victoria the surface of the ground is uneven, there being no large fertile valleys, and a place designated as a plain is also called a "Bay of Biscay." New Zealand is more uneven than the Australian colonies, and where there is timber or scrub it is far more difficult to clear. These objections to New Zealand, to some may seem very serious ones, and the hilly nature of the country certainly is; but a settler of the right sort will not shrink from the difficulties of clearing land, which he believes to be of a richer soil than that possessing less obstacles in the shape of trees and scrub. The northern island, as far as I have seen of it, seems to me more level, or rather less hilly than Otago, and the timber is better to burn, and more valuable for mechanical purposes. I have several acquaintances who, dissatisfied with Victoria, went to the northern island to settle, and they express themselves satisfied with the change they have made. Some of them are settled near Auckland.

The climate of Nelson and its vicinity is the most agreeable of any part of New Zealand. There is the least wind and rain, and the temperature is more even and steady. Coal, copper ore, and gold are also found in Nelson. Shortly before I left the colonies, or about the 1st of October, 1861, six hundred ounces of gold came from the Aorere diggings, and but few miners were working there. The Nelson gold-fields, and that of Otago, are on the same chain of mountains, and will probably, in time, prove to be portions of the same "golden belt."

But I was to give some advice to intending emigrants, and as yet I have only wandered from one place to another, and made a few general assertions upon each. I must redeem the implied promise, and give the advice.

To all people who have a comfortable home in the United Kingdom, or one they can fancy to be comfortable, my advice is, stay there. But there are some young men who will go; and it would not be a bad plan for them, if they take a little money, to go to Victoria first. They will soon become weary of that, and will go to Queensland or New Zealand and settle; whereas if they went to either of the two latter places first, they would be dissatisfied, go to Victoria, find that worse than the other, and have to return.

Single females, if they make any pretensions to respectability, should only emigrate with their parents, and not go to any colony because some old women who govern it send them word that they have sons for them to marry.

I would not advise emigrants to go to any place for the purpose of gold-mining, although, for a colony to possess gold-fields, is one great inducement for emigrants to choose it for a home. Those who have not acted wisely are able to give good advice; and after ten years' experience in gold-digging, my advice to any one who wishes to do well is, never dig for gold. Gold-digging has been the ruin of three fourths of those who have

followed it long. The wealth they have found has made fortunes for others, and the diggers are the last to be benefited by their own toil.

The little and big "rushes" from one part of the country to another have much to do in bringing about this result; and even when diggers are not on a tramp, so much of their time is passed in finding a payable claim, that when they do get one it must be very good to pay wages for the time they are looking for and working it. There is no class of working people whose time is so much of it thrown away, or lost in unprofitable toil, as that of gold-diggers. A hole will be sunk in some untried place, a little "prospect" obtained, and a rush set in and turn the ground over for a month, and enough gold may not be found to pay for working one claim. A patch of rich ground is often found in some hill or gully, and all the reports of its richness may be true and sufficiently encouraging to justify the gathering of several thousand diggers, who travel night and day to reach the place. The extent of rich ground may consist of only four or five claims, and labour enough may be spent to work a thousand. No labouring man can be successful in saving money when meeting with disappointments and loss of time like that. The loss of time and money, when such sensations as the rushes to Port Curtis, Snowey River, and Otago occur, cannot but seriously injure the welfare of the diggers generally.

There are people all over the world who squander their best years in pursuits that never benefit themselves or others. They will not acknowledge that they are looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. They will not own that they are trying to make a silk purse from a sow's ear. Yet all their days are passed in trying to accomplish tasks equally as possible and important. There is no class of people who form an example of the truth of this on so grand a scale as gold-diggers; not that the occupation of all of them benefits none, but that their time and labour is less remunerative to themselves and others, than any other class of an equal number of hard toiling men.

LEDESDALE GRANGE.

A TALE OF COAL-FIELDS AND CORN-FIELDS.

CHAPTER XIII.—KITTY MOORCROFT'S FRIENDS.

It was night; the heavens, "watching with their thousand eyes," looked calmly down on Bentwater, as it lay sleeping in its summer beauty. No sound disturbed the perfect quiet that fell around: even the whisper of the breeze was hushed: no stir of leaf, nor murmur of the village brook, broke the profound repose. A thin mist rising upwards from the valley, lightly veiled the landscape; no light appeared in hall or cottage, and slumber's soft, yet mighty spell, seemed laid on all; when a faint noise, a slight sharp sound, came through the midnight stillness. It was repeated; and then the figure of a man emerged into the starlit road. "Go back, Tiny, go back, sir; go back, you brute, this instant." The dog whined, and crouched before his master's feet, but a kick soon showed him what his wisest course would be, and, like a wise animal, he took it. And now the man was alone; not to be long so, however, as indicated by his cautious glancing up the road, his restless moving up and down outside his little gate. A hand laid on his shoulder made him start violently. "Jim, is that the way you take a fellow's breath away? How late you are!"

"I lay a thinking of my mammy, and what w'd be her feelings concerning me," rejoined his hopeful comrade, with a most unpleasant chuckle. "Be ye ready now, Dan?"

"Ready! I'd a gone without you in another minute. How bright the stars shine to-night!"

"What! are they burning into thy conscience already, Dan?" demanded the other, in a sneering tone; and a laugh followed from both, hoarse and loud as they dared venture, while the two accomplices turned into the "Avenue Road," and bent their steps towards Anderton. Striking across fields, after some little time they approached the back of the farmhouse, and peered anxiously through the dim air.

"No light as yet, Dan; a plague on those jades if they fail us now."

"Fail! never fear for my Kitty's faithfulness: I'd back the wench—"

"To the gallows: I don't doubt it; but for me, I'd rather back my own right hand than all the Kitties, Mollies, or Peggies that ever was hatched: and if they aint spy I'll risk—"

"There, sit thee down agen this here bank, Jim, and don't waste precious words in talking nonsense; there's lots o' time to daybreak yet." They sat for twenty minutes, gazing wistfully on the dull windows—the man called Jim chafing and muttering, sometimes shaking his fist at the unconscious building: his companion took it much more coolly.

"'Tis but the business of another night if this don't do," he said, biting a blade of grass.

"'Tis but what serves us right, trusting to girls and idiots," rejoined the other fiercely. "We were mad to do it."

"We were forced to do it, rather say; let us walk round the house; stay, *there* at last." Yes, a light it certainly was, appearing for an instant and then vanishing: both men stood watching earnestly.

"The master himself come to look after us," said Jim.

"Stuff!" said the other; "here it comes again." This time stationary; cautiously they advanced, and as they did so, the window very softly rose, and a woman's voice spoke to them.

"Back, back, for half an hour any way; Kitty is turning coward." The window closed and the light was gone again. The men looked at each other ruefully.

"What d'ye think of *that*?" said Jim, menacingly; for he was one of those, willing at all times to vent his wrath on the nearest object. "There's your precious guide. Now, what'll you do, my fine fellow?"

"Wait the half hour at any rate, and see what turns up then," said his companion. "Come, don't bully now, Jim, for it aint my doing no how."

"Aint it?" said the other, sneeringly; "not for always crying up that snivelling hussy, and talking of her zeal and faithfulness, forsooth; oh, yer a precious couple."

"Not yet," said the man addressed as Dan; "nor never will be, an she shows the white feather now."

"Half an hour!" repeated the other, "why, it's light in half an hour;" and so the time wore on, one fuming and threatening, the other alternately reasoning with and soothing him; when again a window was thrown open, this time hurriedly, and shriek after shriek resounded through the air.

"My Kitty's clapper, and no mistake," said the younger of the two burglars: for their intent could hardly be mistaken; "and now, Jim, we may cut indeed."

What his companion wished to the unfortunate Kitty, or with what choice conversation the two bad men beguiled their homeward route, need not be detailed, with a view either to interest or edify the general reader: its style may be conceived from specimens already shown;

and it was worthy of ruffians who spend their midnight hours watching lights in windows of houses, and venting imprecations on their inmates. And so, unconsciously and undesignedly, Kate Purden had kept the spoiler from that house; had saved poor Kitty the committal of a deadly crime; had brought her, perchance, who knows? on her first step towards repentance and reformation. Mrs. Duckworth fared better than she deserved (indeed, most of us do, or we should come badly off). She little imagined, when so harshly refusing the girl's request to "go to her mother," that she was doing the best thing for her, and that her own unkindness was to be overruled for good. Kitty had dreaded, as well she might, the sight of her early friend and benefactress; she had tried to avoid her, but was baffled in the attempt. Then came the familiar look of that sweet young face; the gentle tones of a voice from which no harsh or angry word had ever reached her; above all, the talk of early years, reminiscences of childhood, which seemed now—oh, *how far* back in the distance; and the heart of poor Kitty Moorcroft, not utterly depraved, was fairly melted within her. But what was to be done? It's much easier to step down in morality than to step back again, as a good many of us have found out by this time; and Miss Kitty's steps were not taken alone either. Strapping Lizzie Hales, her fellow dairymaid, was in the secret, and expecting some of the spoil; and *besides*, what would Dan say? her affianced lover, who was to marry her next month in return for this night's services. She was indeed in a great strait, and feelings, unfortunately, were all she had to guide her, for of principle she had long ago made shipwreck. And what was the pleasant and neatly devised scheme in which these amiable confederates were occupied? *Simply* that of clearing away every valuable on which they could lay their hands—plate, money, ornaments—nothing to come amiss; division to be talked of afterwards!

The feelings of the family, of the mistress especially, may be imagined, when, roused by those unearthly shrieks, they rushed frantically to the landing-place, found the two young women in complete attire, the hour being half-past one A.M., and Kitty in raging hysterics. Mrs. Duckworth, as she afterwards declared, "scented mischief" on the instant; but Miss Hales was impenetrable. "What, forsooth! if she and Kitty chose to get up betimes to do their morning's work, what business was that of anybody else's? The missis was glad enough to get 'em up earlier than that some mornings; and she believed that in England no one couldn't be 'impelled' to lie a-bed agen their will." Still, these remarks were far from satisfactory, as Miss Lizzie, only that her mood was dogged, would have herself perceived. As for the other poor creature, she was, to use a telling local phrase, quite "off it;" screaming was her strong point for more than an hour; then she grew quieter; a gentle moaning took place of her former violence, and was mingled with piteous entreaties to "take her to Miss Kate."

"Jane," said Mrs. Duckworth's youngest daughter, in very subdued accents, to the young lady from Arrowgate, "I'll tell you what I think has come to Kitty."

"Well," said the elder sister, somewhat scornfully.

"I think she's just bewitched, for I heard them talking all about it the other night—about the 'evil eye'—and I'm sure I thought Mrs. Robson had a very evil eye when she was here last night."

Between one and two that afternoon, a hasty summons came from Anderton, for Mr. Eversley, the district magistrate. After a prolonged absence he returned, with a rueful visage. Kate was returning to Ledesdale

the following day, and he was loth to mar the happiness of that last evening; but she got it out of him, and was much distressed in consequence.

"And poor Kitty confessed it all?"

"All but the names of the men implicated in the business; there she was mute as the grave in her moments of sense; but the poor soul was rambling every few minutes, and then, 'Dan, poor Dan,' was always at her tongue's end."

"Ah! Daniel Robson," said Mrs. Eversley; "she has been engaged to him a long time; but still it does not follow."

"No, it does not, my dear; but *he* will be followed, I can tell you—for he is missing—a circumstance not altogether in his favour, you must allow."

"And the other man?" said Kate.

"The other man, I grieve to say, is Jim Hawthorne, of Crow's Nest."

"Not of Crow's Nest now," said Mrs. Eversley. "He has little enough connection with it or his poor old mother now-a-days. It's a sorry business altogether. I do believe," added the good lady, after a pause, "the place gets *wickeder* and *wickeder*;" and she went about her household avocations with considerable perturbation of manner.

"So *you* were the guardian angel in that instance, Mrs. Purden," said her father, fondly stroking the sunny hair, of which he had always been much vainer than its owner was.

"I!" said Kate; "well, yes, those may think so who believe in no invisible guiding Power which influences our lightest words and actions."

"But you and I think otherwise, my child; and may it always be our highest privilege to do so," was her father's answer.

Mr. Eversley went over that night to Crow's Nest to break the sad tidings to poor old Mrs. Hawthorne. He told her gently and tenderly, as a woman could have told them; but not the less heavily did they fall on the crushed heart of his listener; not the less poignant was her sorrow; because she had known long before that the one object of her earthly love was a bad man, who would one day bring her to shame. And then came that most pitiable of all sights to witness—the hopeless distress, of age, the nervous trembling of the frame, the gasping breath, the tremulous motion of the eyelid, the contraction of the withered cheeks, down which, as yet at least, no softening tear will roll. What could her friend do but commend her to the sympathy and love of Him who long ago had "compassion" on the "widow," and who, in her own humble, timid manner, she tried to serve? He asked her neighbours, too, to comfort her as best they could; and when he saw how readily, in their rough, but not ungenial way, they responded to the call, he knew that the Friend who "knoweth our frame," and who "considereth the soul in adversity," would be at hand with far more effectual support and consolation.

CHAPTER XIV.—CONTRADICTIONS.

KITTY MOORCROFT's parents lived in a very picturesque style of cottage, covered with roses, and creepers of all descriptions; at that most picturesque part of a village, where the road suddenly winds round by the water-mill, where "on the bridge you lean to hear the mill-dam rushing down with noise," and where the willows bending over it almost obscure the stream itself from view. Mrs. Eversley, having some very unpicturesque subjects to converse about, set out for that cottage in the cool of the evening, not without considerable perturbations

of spirit—yes, and some most unworthy spasmodic ideas of evading the task which devolved upon her, caused, it must be owned, by too vivid recollections of what Eliza's (Mrs. Moorcroft) tongue was capable of when once set going. For the said Eliza had lived quite long enough at the "Villa" to convince its mistress that, where any point of doctrine was concerned, the maid was pretty sure to win the day; and it was currently rumoured that Moorcroft had adopted a like view of the question, and usually regarded discretion as much the best part of valour.

What a pleasant sight at all times is a village green! There is something, only in the name, which makes one feel buoyant and exhilarated, and up to a game of cricket or any other sport that may be in the wind. Now, in the soft light of evening it looked peculiarly attractive, and in a high state of animation. Children of all ages, freed from their onerous scholastic duties, were evincing their hilarity in shouts, leaps, and other ebullitions of youthful joy. Mrs. Eversley was extremely partial to all children; but she thought none ever at all approached in perfection to her pets at Bentwater. Could it be, she sometimes asked herself, that the little Prudence, or Patience, or Mercy (for abstract nouns were quite the *proper* thing in that place), whose fair soft face and little loving ways were sources of such unfailing pleasure to her, could ever shoot up into objects so much the reverse of loveable, as many of the mothers and big sisters of the present generation? Then she remembered that some of those mothers had, even in her own day, been similar little "Mercies" and "Comforts" in that same school, so that she could only sigh, and hope for the best.

And now the lady had pushed open the wicket, and entered the garden, of which Moorcroft was very reasonably proud. Not once, since the institution of "Cottager's Prizes" in that neighbourhood, had it failed easily to carry off the highest; and as for his cabbages, they were things to be dreamed about. Mrs. Eversley, who had a keen eye for order, was charmed as she looked on the results of the man's industry. Beds weeded as though his life depended on every intruder being kept out; rows of peas and beans in such exquisite regularity and precision that you felt they could not avoid coming to perfection; everything trained or training into its right place, and doing its duty there. Mrs. Moorcroft, reposing from the labours of the day, sat knitting in the porch; knitting, as she did everything, quickly, decidedly, unmistakably; knitting her brows into the bargain, and a trifle more when she saw her visitor approaching. She rose, however, and with a slight curtsey preceded her into the cottage, which, even when not "fettled" up for the evening, as it was now, would generally bear as close inspection as her husband's vegetable and flower beds. A strikingly handsome woman must Mrs. Moorcroft have been in her younger days, and striking looking she was still, though not in a manner quite calculated to please. Some of the children about thought her a very striking person in quite another sense. A much older woman sat "crooning," as people say, over the fire-place, toasting her hands, and seeming to enjoy the blaze, warm as the evening was; this was Mrs. Moorcroft's mother. A pretty cold reception was given to Mrs. Eversley by her old domestic, whose air said plainly enough, "Now, I know quite well what you've come for; mind what you are about, for if you think I'll stand preaching at, why, you're mistaken." And the mistress, if the truth were known, seeing the set face and *stolid* expression, so well remembered, felt tempted to go out a great deal faster than she had come in. Feeling, however, such a proceeding to be slightly undignified,

she saluted her former servant in a few kind, though rather trembling words, and then, advancing to the old woman in the chimney-corner, asked how she was? "Eh! bless you, my lady, I'm bad enough; but better nor I deserve to be, a deal more better; eh! bless the Lord for all his mercies; eh! bless him," repeating the latter phrase a great many times, in a tone that by no means pleased her bearer, who knew the woman's character too well to admire the irreverent formalism from her lips. She turned quickly round to Mrs. Moorcroft: "Your poor daughter Eliza, poor Kitty; I am so sorry; you cannot tell how grieved I am."

The tone and words, the look and gesture, were enough to have disarmed her; but the girl's mother had evidently braced herself up for the occasion; and, whatever the address, her reply would have been the same.

"Why, what's her done?" she said roughly.

"Done! why, surely you must have heard, Eliza; you must be aware?"

"Heard! yes, I've heard as how she suv her master's house, when one word of hers could have been its ruination; and what reward has she got? what are all the thanks they've giv her? Why, to shut her up in solitary confinement, not so much as letting her own mother come a nigh her; oh, it's a grateful world, that's what it is!"

Mrs. Eversley was so entirely taken aback by this new and remarkable aspect of the case, that she really had no words at hand. Mrs. Moorcroft had, though, and forthwith commenced a solemn, virtuous, and withal rather a loud and noisy protest against the abuses of farm servitude and farm life in general (and N.B. there's nothing like taking the offensive when you've little or nothing to say on the defensive side of a question). "It's very well for you to talk, ma'am; and I will say as you've always done your duty to she and all on us: so you've a right to; but of all the heathenish schools for a poor girl to be trained up in, there's no worse than a farm-house. Milk, milk, churn, churn, day and night, week day and sabbath all alike. Why, to my certain knowledge there's been Sunday after Sunday when her's never gone a-nigh a place of worship, and not so much as an hour g'ien her to mediate quietly in her own chamber, and that along wi' bad companions, and a missis as little better than she ought to be, as most people, and always on the watch for wrong in other folks, and no one to say so much as a word of her duty to God, or to her neighbour; what good can you look for wi' it all? If she had wronged her missis foully, instead of saving her property, 'twas only what the woman might a looked for, say I."

Mrs. Moorcroft was out of breath, and fairly panted; her old mother groaned a chorus, and whined out a most inharmonious conviction of universal depravity. Mrs. Eversley felt decidedly angry, and anger always gives a sort of temporary courage. "I am surprised at you, Eliza; I wonder, I must say, that in my presence you can so speak of remissness on other people's part, when your own conduct has been so extremely neglectful. Pray, what example do you and Moorcroft set your children in attending the house of God, that you should dare to censure other people? and as for the light in which you seem to view your daughter's present——"

"Ay, that's the way, *that's* the way all the world over," said Mrs. Moorcroft, too indignant now even to knit: "side with the rich, bless you, whatever they do, and let the poor eat their humble pie; but that's not the doctrine the Bible teaches, unless I'm a blind mole; and if that's all the good as comes of church-going and sabbath-keeping, why then, thinks I to myself, we're best wi'out it all;" which observation, it may be remarked,

was less conspicuous for consistency than probably the speaker intended it to be. Mrs. Eversley thought it best now to apply the soothing ointment: "Well, Eliza," she said gently, "without talking now of past faults, or how this sad state of things might have been averted, don't you think it well to consider how further evil might be prevented, and, as the mother of that unhappy girl, lend a helping hand to save her from falling lower?"

At this moment Moorcroft, returning from work at the Hall, entered his cottage. His wife darted a glance at his boots, apparently not satisfactory, for she told him to go back again and "scrape;" but he had caught the last sentence their visitor uttered, and was disobedient for once. "A bad business, ma'am," he began; "a bad business; a naughty hussy to go get herself mixed up with it at all. It's a good strapping she deserves for it this minute, and what she'd get, too, an I had her by me."

"Don't distress thyself, John," remarked his wife, ironically; "for the wench 'ull find good friends enow who'll gladly save thee trouble."

"We must not talk of strapping now," interposed Mrs. Eversley: "it would do more harm than good; but rather let us try so to work upon her better feelings that she may see the enormity of her contemplated sin, as well as its fearful consequences."

"Th'arnt got much faith in feelings myself," said Moorcroft, "as don't touch skin and bone; for I never found 'em come to much. I'd as lief try watering and coaxing a young tree which was dying away for want of a good pruning knife."

"Nay," said the lady, smiling; "on your principle you'd be content with hacking away at a few dead leaves, and carry your pruning no further down."

But it is needless to pursue the conversation. It has been already said that Mrs. Eversley was a person of little or no originality of conception, and the reader might justly feel aggrieved at having offered for his consideration remarks already suggesting themselves in a superior form; but she left the cottage with a sadder heart than she entered it. And yet the setting sun was shedding a sort of glory over a landscape of exceeding beauty; the birds, whom heat had silenced through the day, took up again the song they had suspended; and, as she passed the bridge, a little child, evidently watching for her return, darted out of the hedge and thrust a bunch of wild flowers into her hand, with a laugh so full and clear and ringing, that all around appeared to laugh along with her.

"The woods were filled so full of song,
There seemed no room for sense of wrong
So variously were all things wrought,
I marvelled how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought."

So says one of our modern poets; but it is not probable that Mrs. Eversley recalled his words on the occasion, nor even that she had ever read them, moralizing being more her forte than "poetizing." If now she moralized, even *prosed* a little to herself, it is hardly to be wondered at, when marking how essentially at variance nature and man appeared just then to be. It did seem strange that a place so favoured outwardly, should wear so foul an inner aspect as Bentwater did. It did not rank much lower than its neighbours in the moral scale, but those who knew it well could tell that, in that secluded "nest," among those cottages, which, with their simple thatch and rose-covered lattices, looked the abode of innocence itself, such deeds of wickedness were perpetrated as we blush to associate with the recesses of our over-crowded

cities. Whatever neglect might have caused the evil to take root in former years, ignorance could no longer be alleged as an excuse for crime. "They can teach me," was the testimony of one who had laboured unwearyingly among them for many years. "I am at a loss how to reprove in any terms which they have not themselves anticipated." The picture is not over-coloured: the fact unhappily exists as stated. And are these scenes of beauty powerless in leading the mind heavenward? Alas! it is so. A love for the Creator must first exist in the heart, or the loveliest object in creation can never elicit it.

FOR A FAMILY IN TIME OF DISTRESS OR DANGER.

Oh, God, that maddest earth and sky, the darkness and the day,
Give ear to this thy family, and help us when we pray!
For wide the waves of bitterness around our vessel roar,
And heavy grows the pilot's heart to view the rocky shore!

The cross our Master bore for us, for Him we fain would bear;
But mortal strength to weakness turns, and courage to despair!
Then mercy on our failings, Lord! our sinking faith renew!
And when thy sorrows visit us, oh, send thy patience too!

BISHOP HEBER.

A LONG WALK AND A SHORT STORY.

CHAPTER II.

"'Tis twenty-seven year ago, come Candlemas, my sons, since my good man met with the adventure as I'm about to give to ye. Yes, twenty-seven year it is, though 'tis as yesterday to me. Well, you must know that at that time things wasn't as they do be now. Smuggling was as common then as pilchards to Polpero, and just this coast here were the very nest and home of it, as I myself can testify, and many's the lawless deed's bin acted here; for look-ee, my young masters, they was a most desperate set hereabouts, terrible, and feared neither God nor man. 'Twas the eve o' my boy's wedding, I do remind me; a fine strong lad he was, and no but just five-and-thirty years of age at that time. Ah, my sons, he's a great man now out to Australy; but he's a good boy to his old mother, as he always was. They—that's my son, you know, and pretty young Betsy Hawkins—had made all up between them, and was to be married next day, though 'twas liker being a sadder day for him and all of us. We'd had a few friends merry-making to home, and all went happily and cheerily. My good man's turn of duty came on pretty early, and he would be back in time for tea, and to finish the night to home. He stayed amongst us till the last moment, then buckles on his belt, and takes his traps, and starts off to his beat, and we kept up the fun, laughing and happy, little knowing what was going on on the beach at Smuggler's Cove. Time drew on, and the hour came when my John should ha' come back to us, but no John came. Well, we waited tea for him till all was cold, and then I 'gan to get vexed like with him, and then frightened; and still the hands o' the clock went round, and still John Martin was abroad. The daylight was waning now, and an hour and more had passed whilst I had been listening for his footstep on the path. I could keep silence no longer.

"'Will,' says I to my boy, 'thy father's not to home yet; what can keep him?'

"'Hoot, mother, what can? He's forgot the hour. Send little Tom Wilcox to call hum to's tea.'

"'Out went little Tom, but soon came back, saying as how he'd a called him all along the beach, but had neither seen nor heard him answer. Scared I was now

in airnest, and son Will too. Up jumps he to go look for his father, and all the lads with him, and surely I went too. All along the shore we went calling loudly, but without answer. At last we came to Smuggler's Cove: still no answer; but there were footsteps in the soft sand here, and my heart fairly stopped beating as I saw prints of many different shoes, and a little nearer to where the tide was rolling in, the signs of a severe struggle. Anxiously my eyes peered about in the uncertain light. Something glittered on the ground. I rushed towards it, but son Will seized my arm and held me back.

"'Too late, my boy! too late!' I cried; 'I have seen it already.'

"It was my husband's sword, broken and smeared with blood. Near it lay his pistols, both discharged, and evidently not noticed in the scuffle; or else his murderers—for murdered I felt sure he was—had hurried away to escape detection, and left the senseless witnesses behind. My heart shrunk within me, and I felt sick and faint, and almost unable to stand.

"'Take her back, two of you; 'tis no fit place for her. Go, mother, I say!' he continued sternly, 'and leave the rest to me.' But he kissed me gently, dear boy, ere they led me home.

"Home! what was that to me—desolate, heart-broken? Well, I reached home, and was carried into this room, and set down carefully in this chair, and the women folk nursed and tended me, and bravely I tried for strength to bear what might come. Nor did I try in vain, my sons, for I sought it from the right place—from *there*, young masters; don't forget, for you yourselves may need it—from *there*;" and the good dame solemnly raised her eyes and hands, and the gesture fully conveyed her pious meaning.

"Long, long I sat listening for coming sounds; how long I know not, for I could take no count of time, I thought, when my John was, maybe, in eternity. And the kind women folk kept silence in respect to my sudden grief, or only talked in whispers.

"'There's some one coming, Betsy, lass,' I exclaimed suddenly. All ears were strained to catch the sound for a second or more, and then the heads were drawn back to their former position; the whispering began again, and I knew they did not believe me.

"'Yes, but I hear it, if you do not; here they come. Silence! there's Will's step, but *his* is not there. They're coming slowly; they're afraid to tell me. What makes them keep step so, I wonder! Oh, Lord help me!' I cried, as the horrible answer to my question flashed across me. 'They're carrying his corpse. He's dead!'

"For a moment, grief so sudden bewildered and made me powerless—but only for a moment; again strength was mercifully given me, and I became calm and collected. They were coming up the path now, and were close to the very door. The women rose to open it.

"'No, no, my girls,' said I, 'sit still, I say. Dead or living, none shall open for John Martin this night but his wife.' And I stepped boldly forth and threw wide the door.

"'Oh, mother! mother! go back,' cried poor Will.

"'Silence, my son! God has given me much strength; bring him this way, and lay the poor body on his own bed. God's will be done!'

"'Amen!' repeated the men, every one; and so they laid him down, gently, gently on the soft bed, his eyes closed, and his brawny arms, once so strong, now falling powerless at his sides.

"'And now go, all of you, for awhile, and Will, my boy, come again to me in five minutes; but leave me

till then alone with my poor man that's gone.' And so they went.

"Gently I parted the damp grey hair on his bold forehead, again and again kissed the cold brow, and sank on my tottering knees to pray for help and comfort to my bruised heart. "Not a sound was in the house; all were thunderstruck at the blow that had fallen on us. Then, though I prayed, I could hear Will's soft tread as he came, and his gentle tap at the door.

"Come in, my fatherless lad,' I said to him; 'come in and let us join in our prayers.' And he came and knelt at my side, and tenderly passed his arm round his old mother's waist. Suddenly the hand was withdrawn, he started, and was on his feet in an instant.

"Mother! look!" he cried. I raised my head slowly. In a moment I, too, stood erect. 'The doctor, Will, quick! go for him instantly. Help! help!' I cried, at the door; 'make a fire! get hot water! blankets! quick, for mercy's sake! my John's not gone yet.' And all rushed into the room to see what I had seen, his eyelids partly raised, the lips open, and the chest moving, scarce perceptibly, but still moving, heaving gently and tremblingly, as if breath was struggling to get back to the poor body; but that was enough for me—enough, for the moment, to turn my night into day—enough, for there was hope.

"Willing hands were soon at work, prompted by willing hearts, and oh, joy unspeakable! not half an hour had passed before the good man had opened wide his eyes, and greeted me with a smile—and such a smile it was! Many's the loving one I've had from him, but never one like that; for it said more than thousands of words could do. After the first convulsive gasp or two, the breath came and went regular, and I felt that my husband was left to me yet, and I fell on my knees to pour out my heart before God, the second time that night. But what different words came to my lips! Now, all was deep, deep gratitude and happy words of thanksgiving, where, but one short hour before, had been nought but weeping and wailing, given out in bitter, bitter sorrow.

"Ah, my sons! forgive an old woman for dwelling so long on her joys and troubles; but when I speak of all this, 'tis hard to know where to stop. But I'll not keep ye long, and, moreover, ye're good listeners." She pauses for a moment, wipes away a tear from her eye, and once more takes up the thread of her narrative.

"When t' doctor came, little enough was left for him to do, for by this time John was mended greatly, and a little o' something warm made him quite himself again; and though he weren't altogether man enough just yet to go to t' church i' morning, the boy and his lass were married none the less, and the good man were at the door to welcome them as man and wife.

"Ah's me! they're to Australy now, and—but dear me! if I haven't a'most altogether forgot to tell ye how the father came i' such a state that night.

"You mind, young masters, how he went forth to his duty. Well, he goes maundering on and on, right away to Smuggler's Cove, and then he turns round to come back again, when he sees a boat out on the sands, with never a body next or near her.

"'Tis queer,' thinks he to himself. 'Wonder what's a doing. Don't think that's the cut of any of our craft hereabouts. S'pose I go and have a look at her;' and he set off to carry his purpose out, but hadn't got a dozen yards when he heard footsteps behind him. At this he turned round, and a whole party of men were at his heels, who had evidently been lurking among the rocks at the mouth of the Cove.

"Terrible odds these be; but I'll have a tussle for it anyway,' says he; for he knew at once they were smugglers. So he outs with 's pistols, and bangs at them with both; but, as luck would have it, fired in too great a hurry, and missed.

"At any rate, some one 'll hear that,' he thought; but, odd enough, nobody did, except that old coward, Jim Dawson, as used to live at the top of the cliff just there, and tend goats, and he only locked his door, instead of offering a helping hand to any one as needed it.

"They was upon him in a moment; and though he struck about with his cutlass till he broke it, they soon overpowered him, gagged, and bound him so tight, the ruffians! that he couldn't move, no, not even to turn over and roll. Then, as soon as they'd made him safe, they got to the boat and rowed away, for he could hear the oars a-playing in the rowlocks.

"Here I be, with a vengeance,' thinks he; 'hows'ever, I'm not so much knocked about but I can 'bide here till morning, and then some one's sure to find me, if they don't before; but I wish the blackguards hadn't tied me so owdacious tight: my legs be a'most cut a-two. I wonder what time it is; they'll be missing me whome soon, and then there'll be a sarch, and may be I'll be in time for supper yet. What a noise the sea makes, to be sure! I can look at that t'amuse myself, anyhow. Eh, what! the tide's coming in; God have mercy on me, and send me help, and that quick, or poor Jack Martin 'll be drowned—drowned like a dog, and with his wretched old limbs tied too.'

"Oh, my sons! the misery, the agony, he must have gone through, a watching the waves rolling in, nearer and nearer, slowly but surely creeping on to swallow up their victim. Ugh!" says the dame, with a shudder; "I can't abear either to think or talk of that, but ye can well imagine it. And then comes little Tom's voice, a calling all along the beach, and he with the horrid gag in his mouth, unable to answer a word to save his life.

"And now the water was touching him, and now dashing against his feet and gradually turning him round in its unrelenting strength. Bravely he bore up for a while, but in vain, 'twas all in vain; and then his strength failed, and the water was bubbling into his mouth and ears; he prayed with his few last gasps for mercy in the world to come, his senses left him, and 'surely the bitterness of death was past.'

"Ah-h!" and a deep sigh is heaved from the capacious chest; 'twas then they found him, 'twas just then Will saw something at the edge of the coming tide. He rushed towards it, and there was the body of his own father, with the salt waves already leaping over it. Five minutes, three, one, and he had gone, never, never to return."

And good Mistress Martin raises her eyes to heaven, and breathes a grateful prayer, though the object of all this tenderness, all this love and agony, has passed away, years, ay, many weary years ago.

Press her hand gently, friend, and let us go forth noiselessly; her thoughts are back with those she still loves so fondly—the husband whom God has taken, and the son in a far-off land, with the blue sea rolling thousands and thousands of miles between. Out into the soft sunlight, with the cool breeze from the mighty deep to fan our brows, as we climb the beetling rocks and hurry homewards to our early meal. Our walk is over for to-day, but we must not forget Dame Martin, nor the lesson she has taught us, and some day, perhaps, will taste her cider and her saffron cake again.